



## 8. Library Services

### WHAT IS THE SERVICE?

Public libraries are an important resource to meet the changing needs of individuals and communities. They foster literacy, life-long learning and support a love of reading in people of all ages. Libraries also provide support for newcomers and job seekers, and build diverse communities. They address the digital divide and help individuals and communities transition to a global, knowledge-based economy.

Public libraries meet these objectives through the provision of:

- ▶ Collections of books, periodicals, magazines and articles
- ▶ Reference and referral services to provide information and readers advisory
- ▶ Access to technology and digital content
- ▶ Individual study space as well as community meeting rooms
- ▶ Outreach and partnerships initiatives

These services are delivered within the library and beyond through the virtual library and collaborative resource sharing networks.

### WHAT ARE THE MAJOR SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES?

Issues facing the delivery of Library Services are:

- ▶ Diversity - the need to tailor library services and offer collections in many languages due to the increasing social, economic and cultural diversity of the population
- ▶ Renovation - older library branches need to be reconfigured for current service needs
- ▶ Technology - the continual need to update and improve the technology infrastructure to keep electronic library services current and relevant
- ▶ Demand - libraries experience increased demand for expanded hours of operation to provide physical access to computers that may not be present in homes

## WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

It should be noted that data provided in figures 8.1 through 8.3 for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, are only for the library service it provides to its four rural townships and does not include results for the three cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo.

### How many times were libraries used?

FIG. 8.1 Electronic and Non-Electronic Library Uses per Capita

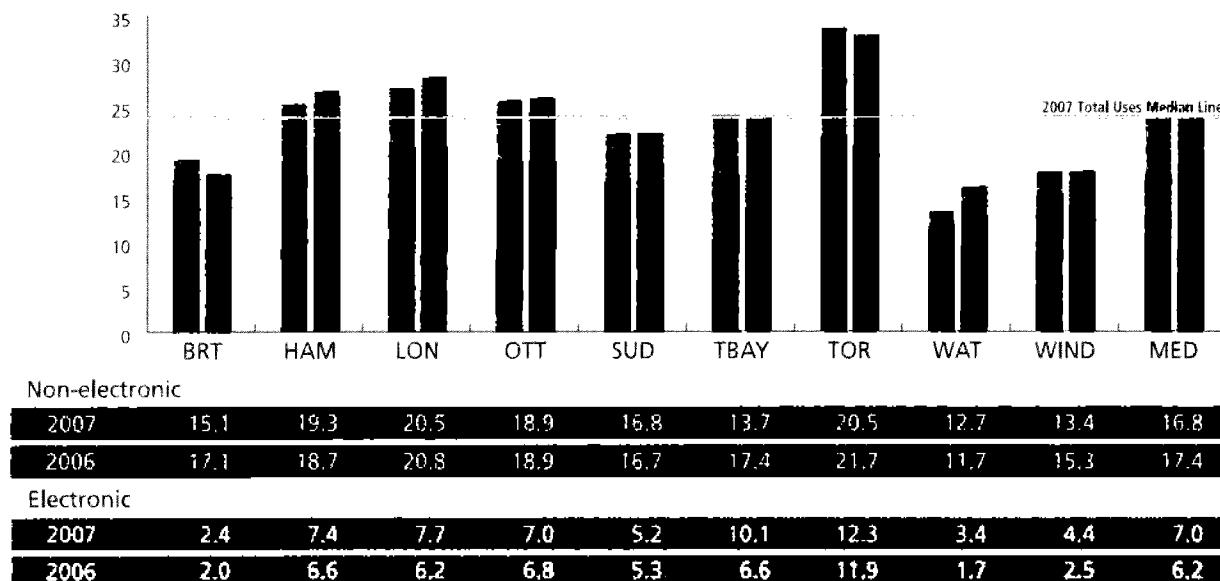


Figure 8.1 illustrates the total of electronic and non-electronic library uses on a per capita basis, as well as separate results for the two categories of uses. The primary goal of a municipal library system is to have residents maximize their use of library resources and programming.

Non-electronic library uses include:

- ▶ A visit to a library branch
- ▶ Borrowing materials
- ▶ Reference questions
- ▶ Use of materials within the branch
- ▶ Attendance at programs

Electronic library use is a growing service channel of many library systems. It includes:

- ▶ The use of computers in libraries
- ▶ On-line collections available in branches
- ▶ 24-hour access to library web services and collections from home, work or school

### How many times is each item borrowed from a library?

FIG. 8.2 Average Number of Times in Year Circulating Items are Borrowed (Turnover)

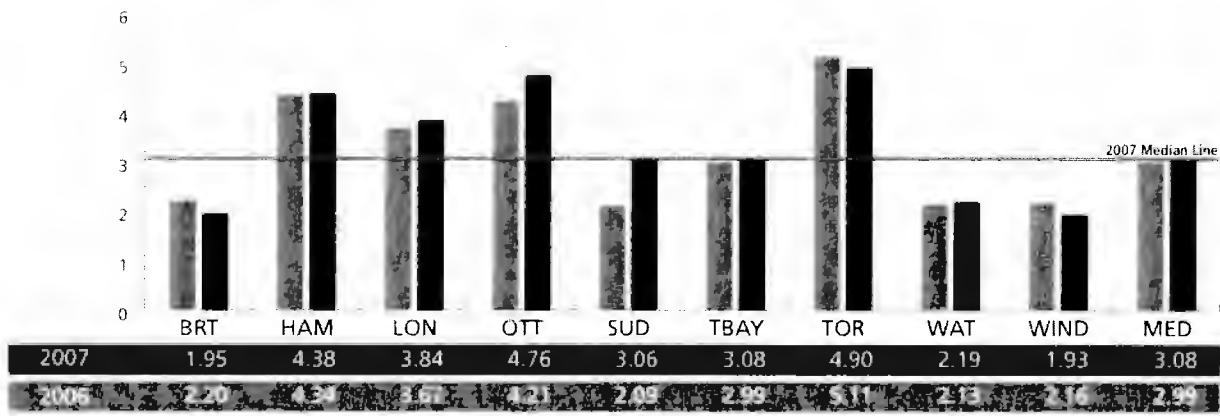


Figure 8.2 shows the number of times items are borrowed in a year. This is one way the quality of a library's collection can be evaluated. Generally, if an item has been borrowed many times in a year, it is an indication of how popular and relevant the item is to users.

### How much does it cost for each library use?

FIG. 8.3 Library Cost per Use

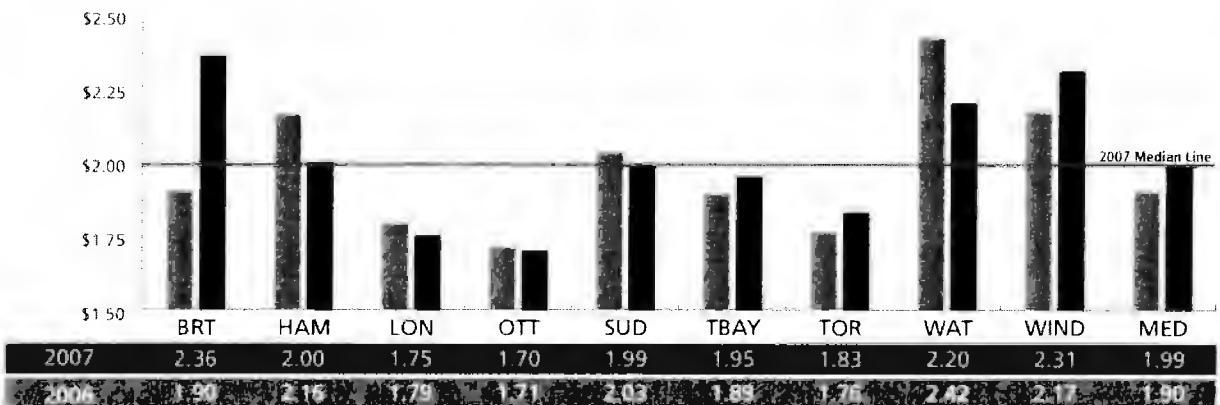


Figure 8.3 reflects the cost per library use, which includes all the different types of electronic and non-electronic library uses described earlier. Varying amounts of staff resources are required to support those different types of uses.

### **WHAT SHOULD YOU CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING THESE RESULTS?**

Each municipality's results are influenced to varying degrees by a number of factors, including:

- ▶ Access - number and size of branches and their hours of operation
- ▶ Collections - size and mix, as well as number of languages supported in those collections
- ▶ Programs - range of program offerings to the public
- ▶ Library use - mix, variety and depth of library uses and the varying amount of staff resources required to support those different uses
- ▶ Web services - availability and degree of investment in web services
- ▶ Demographics - socio-economic and cultural make-up of the population served

For more information about the results, contact the Municipality's representative listed in Appendix F, page 94.

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Public libraries are important for the educational and social development of residents of all ages and backgrounds. They serve and help to build our diverse communities and the desire of residents to increase their knowledge, learning and quality of life. They also foster the simple pleasure of reading.

Public libraries meet these objectives through a variety of materials, services, and programs that are always changing to meet the ever-increasing needs of residents.

With the emergence of the Internet, library services are expanding beyond their role of providing accessible educational and leisure materials in print form, to offering library and reference materials through the Internet and computers. These electronic services have become an integral part of library operations, extending public access beyond physical library walls.





# Library Services

## 2007 Performance Measurement And Benchmarking Report

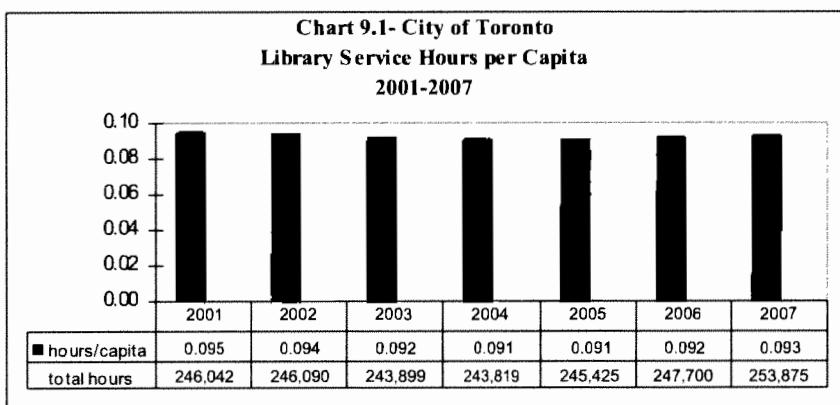
Meas. Cat.	Measure Name	Internal Comparison of Toronto's 2007 vs. 2006 Results		External Comparison to Other Municipalities (OMBI) By Quartile for 2007		Chart & Page Ref.
		Service Level (Resources)	Efficiency/Effectiveness (Results)	Service Level (Resources)	Efficiency/Effectiveness (Results)	
Service Level	Annual Number of Library Service Hours per Capita	<b>Favourable</b> Library hours have increased	-	<b>3</b> Low number of library hours	-	9.1 9.2 pg. 93
Service Level	Number of Library Holdings per Capita	<b>Stable</b> Size of library holdings has remained stable	-	<b>1</b> Highest number of library holdings	-	9.3 9.4 pg. 94
Comm. Impact	Annual Library Uses per Capita (Electronic & Non-Electronic)	-	<b>Unfavourable</b> Total library uses are decreasing	-	<b>1</b> Highest rate of library use	9.5 9.6 pg. 95
Comm. Impact	Non- Electronic Uses per Capita	-	<b>Unfavourable</b> Decrease in total non-electronic uses	-	<b>1</b> Highest non-electronic library use	9.5 9.6 pg. 95
Community Impact	Electronic Library Uses per Capita	-	<b>Favourable</b> Increasing electronic library use	-	<b>1</b> Highest electronic library use	9.5 9.6 pg. 95
Cust. Service	Average Number of Times in Year Circulating Items are Borrowed (Turnover)	-	<b>Unfavourable</b> Turnover rate of circulating materials is decreasing	-	<b>1</b> Highest turnover rate of circulating materials	9.7 9.8 pg. 96
Effici.	Library Cost per Use	-	<b>Unfavourable</b> Increased cost per library use	-	<b>2</b> Lower cost per library use	9.9 9.10 pg. 96
<b>Overall Results</b>		1 - Favourable 1 - Stable 0 - Unfavour.	1 - Favourable 0 - Stable 4 - Unfavour.	1 - 1 <sup>st</sup> quartile 0 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> quartile 1 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> quartile 0 - 4 <sup>th</sup> quartile	4 - 1 <sup>st</sup> quartile 1 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> quartile 0 - 3 <sup>rd</sup> quartile 0 - 4 <sup>th</sup> quartile	100% favourable or stable 20% favourable or stable 50% above median 100% above median

For an explanation of how to interpret this summary and the supporting charts, please see pages vii - ix. These quartile results are based on a maximum sample size of 7 municipalities.

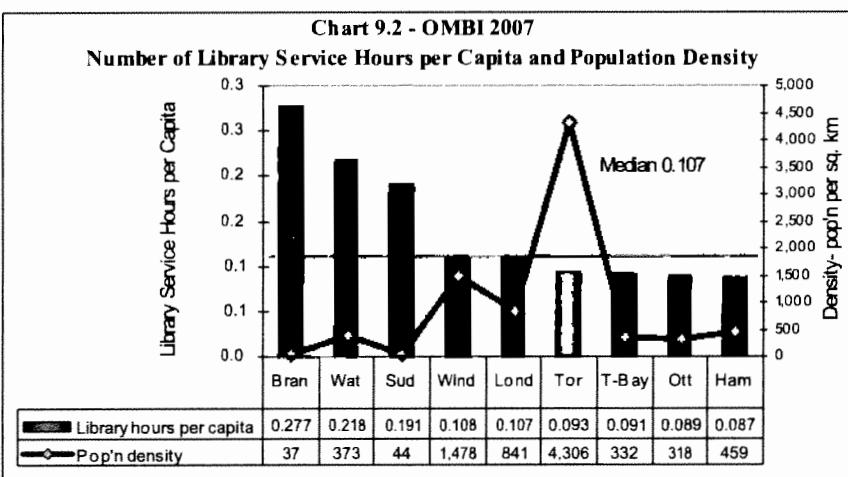


## Library Services 2007 Performance Measurement And Benchmarking Report

### Service Level – How Many Hours Are Library Branches Open in Toronto?



### Service Level – How Do Toronto's Library Hours Compare to Other Municipalities?



Toronto ranks 6<sup>th</sup> of 9 municipalities (3<sup>rd</sup> quartile) in terms of having the highest number of library service hours per capita.

A municipality's result can be influenced by the density (persons per square kilometre) of its population, which has been plotted as a line graph relative to the right axis and it can be seen that Toronto is far more densely populated than the other municipalities. Municipalities with relatively lower population densities may require more library branches, and hence more service hours so that service can be provided within a reasonable distance of residents. In a more urban setting like Toronto, residents can use non-vehicular alternatives modes to travel to a library such as public transit or walking. If the average weekly service hours per branch is compared, Toronto ranks 1<sup>st</sup> of 9.

As noted earlier, these service hours do not consider the size of library branches and the range of service provided at those branches. There is an increased need and demand to extend service hours as population density increases. Greater value is placed on access to study space, research materials, and a central community hub where residents can relax and engage with others. As a densely populated urban area, Toronto requires more study space, computers for public use, program areas and access to meeting room space. This measure also does not consider if the range of service hours provided, maximizes usage of library branches in municipalities.

Two aspects of library services that can be used to compare service levels are:

- The service hours of library branches.
- The size of the library holdings or collections.

Chart 9.1 summarizes the number of library service hours that all Toronto library branches were open, on a per capita basis from 2001 to 2007. Total hours have also been provided. Over this period, the library increased hours of operation at 52 of its 99 branches as part of its efforts to improve branch service.

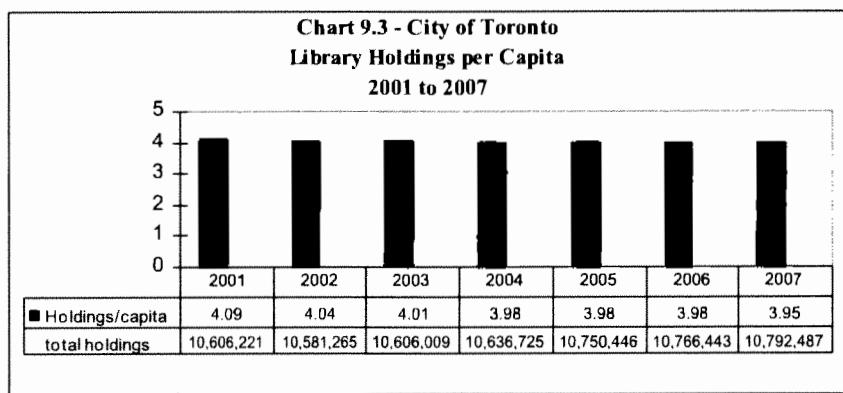
Chart 9.2 compares Toronto's library service hours per capita to other Ontario municipalities, which are plotted as bars relative to the left axis. This calculation is based on the sum of hours at all library branches that were open in 2007, regardless of the size of those branches.

This measurement excludes the numerous electronic services provided on a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week basis, through library web sites, as well as through outreach services such as bookmobiles.

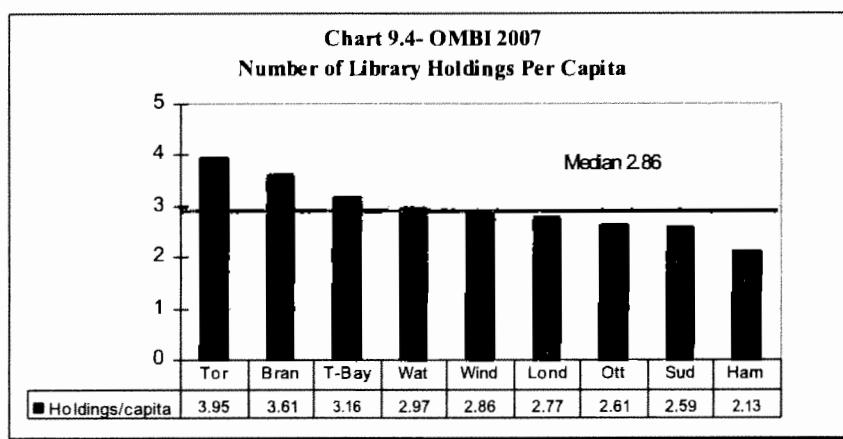


## Library Services 2007 Performance Measurement And Benchmarking Report

### Service Level – What is the Size of Toronto’s Library Holdings or Collection Size?



### Service Level - How Does the Size of Toronto’s Library Collection Compare to Other Municipalities?



Another indication of service levels is the size of the library holdings/collection per capita, which consist of both print and electronic media.

Print media include:

- Reference collections
- Circulating/ borrowing collections
- Periodicals

Electronic media include:

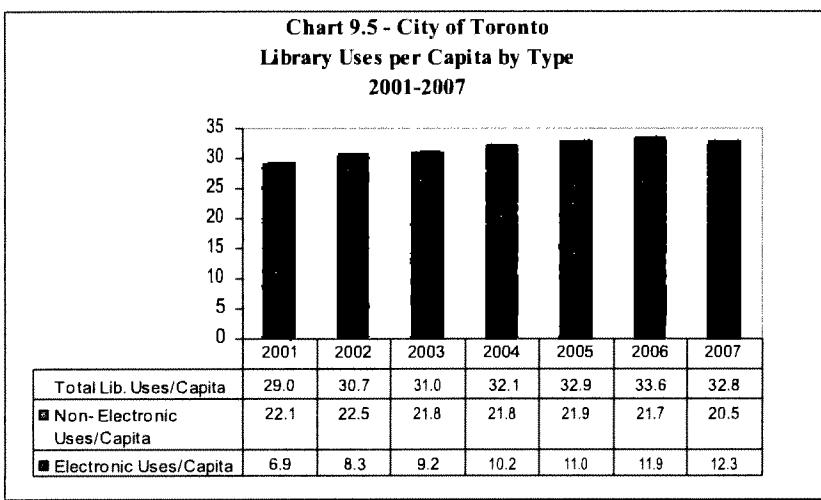
- CDs/DVDs
- Downloadable materials
- Audio books

Chart 9.3 provides information on Toronto’s library holdings per capita for the years 2001 to 2007 as well as the total number of holdings. Library holdings have been stable over this period and in 2007 amounted to almost 10.8 million items.

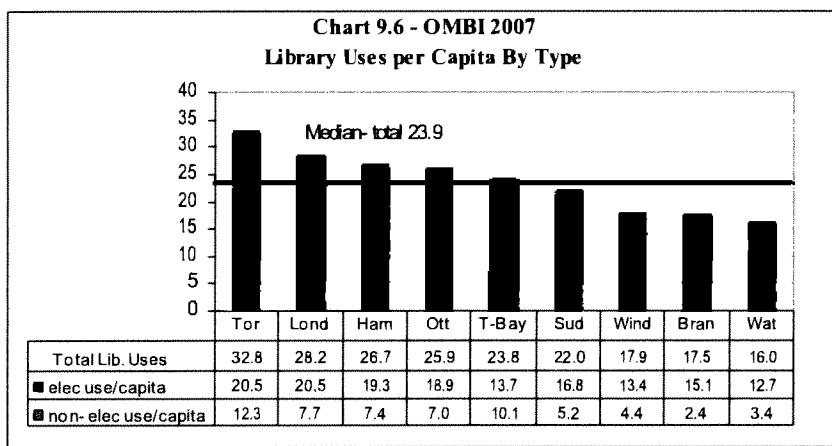
Chart 9.4 compares the 2007 number of library holdings per capita in Toronto to other municipalities. Toronto ranks 1<sup>st</sup> of 9 municipalities (1<sup>st</sup> quartile), in terms of having the largest library holdings.

Municipal results for this measure can be influenced by differing needs for multilingual collections and the size of a library’s electronic collection. Toronto’s top placing relates to our extensive research and reference collections which include special collections and archival materials, an expansive array of electronic products and services, and diverse multilingual and English as a Second Language collections.

### Community Impact - How often do Toronto Residents Use our Library System?



### Community Impact - How Does Library Use in Toronto Compare to Other Municipalities?



In 2007 electronic uses continued to increase while non-electronic and total library uses, fell possibly due to the cost containment measures undertaken in the fall of 2007, which included Sunday closings and a hiring freeze resulting in declining library visits and use.

Chart 9.6 compares Toronto's 2007 library use per capita, to other municipalities. Toronto falls in the 1<sup>st</sup> quartile for the highest rate of library use, ranking 1<sup>st</sup> of 9 municipalities for total library uses, electronic library uses and non-electronic uses.

A number of variables can influence how much and how often a library is used, including:

- The number and size of branches
- Hours of operation
- The size and mix of collections
- The number of languages supported in library collections
- The range of program offerings
- The availability and degree of investment in web services
- Effectiveness of outreach activities

One of the primary goals of a municipal library system is to maximize the use of library resources and programming by residents.

Library uses have been grouped into two categories:

- Non-electronic
- Electronic

Non-electronic library uses include:

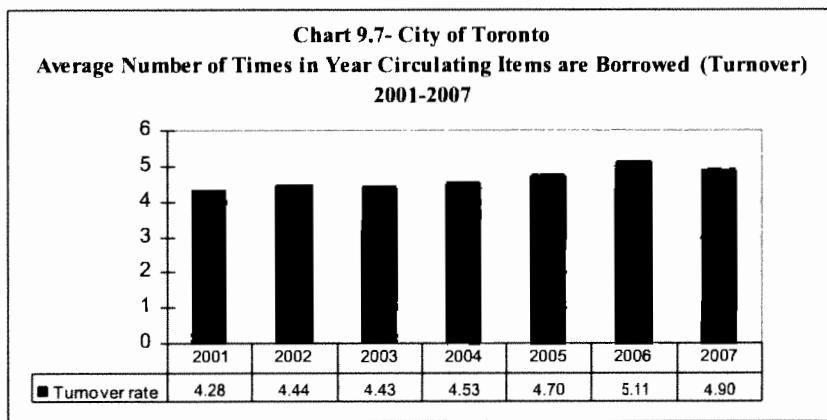
- A visit to a library branch
- Borrowing materials
- Reference questions
- Use of materials within the branch
- Attendance at programs

Electronic library use is a growing service channel of many library systems. It includes:

- The use of computers in libraries
- On-line collections available in branches
- 24-hour access to library web services and collections from home, work or school

Chart 9.5 illustrates how many times Toronto's library system was used, on a per capita basis, from 2001 to 2007.

### Customer Service – How Often Are Items Being Borrowed From Toronto's Circulating Collection?



The quality of a library's collection is an important consideration for library users. The average number of times each item in a library's circulating collection is borrowed (turnover), is one way of measuring this quality.

Generally, if the number of times an item has been borrowed in a year is higher, it is an indication of how popular and relevant the item is to users.

### Customer Service – How Does Toronto's Borrowing/Turnover Rate Compare to Other Municipalities?

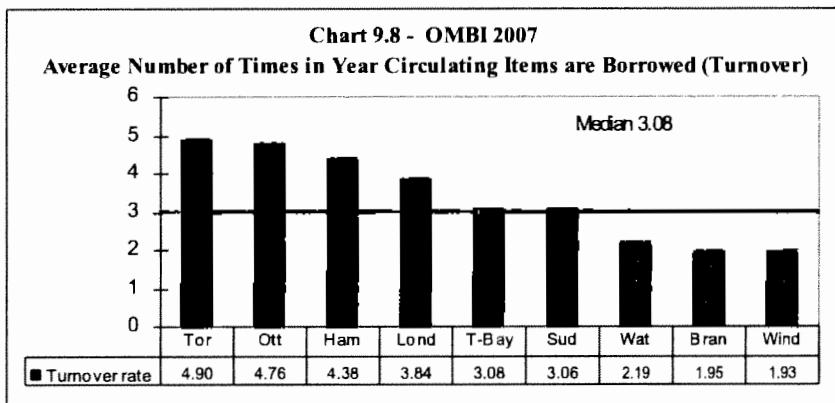


Chart 9.7 provides data on the turnover rate of Toronto's circulating collection for the years 2001 to 2007 and shows results generally increasing/ improving over this period with the exception of 2007 when there was a slight decrease. This was possibly due to the cost containment measures undertaken in the fall of 2007, which included Sunday closings and a hiring freeze resulting in declining library visits and use.

Chart 9.8 compares Toronto's 2007 turnover rate for its circulating collection to other municipalities. Toronto ranks 1<sup>st</sup> of 9 municipalities (1<sup>st</sup> quartile), in terms of having the highest turnover rate.

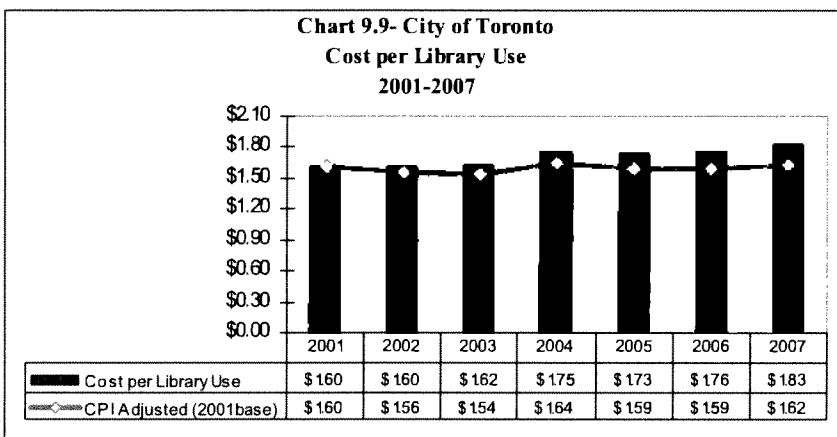
Each municipality's result can be influenced by:

- The size, variety, and how current the circulating collection is.
- The extent of library web services available.
- Each library system's borrowing policy.



## Library Services 2007 Performance Measurement And Benchmarking Report

### Efficiency – What Does it Cost in Toronto for Each Library Use?



The cost of library services in relation to the number of library uses can be used to assess the efficiency of library systems.

Chart 9.9 illustrates Toronto's cost per library use for the years 2001 to 2007. Results have also been provided that adjust for changes in Toronto's Consumer Price Index (CPI) using 2001 as the base year. Results over this period have been stable with a slight increase in 2007 but if adjusted for inflation, the 2007 cost is very close to that of 2001.

### Efficiency - How Does Toronto's Cost per Library Use, Compare to Other Municipalities?

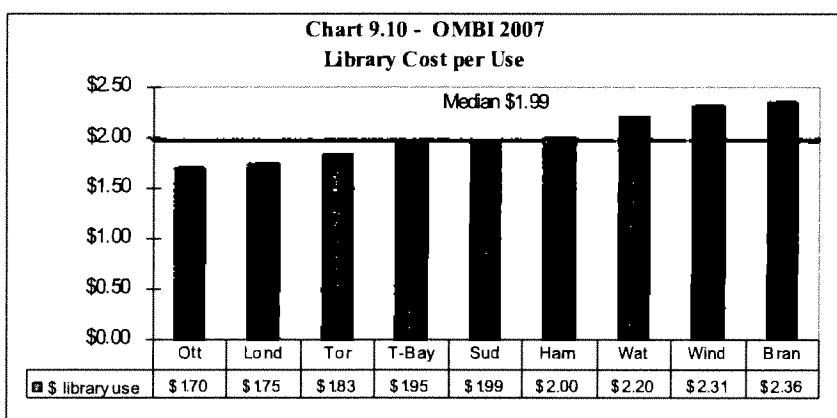


Chart 9.10 compares Toronto's 2007 cost per library use to other municipalities. Toronto ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> of 9 municipalities (2<sup>nd</sup> quartile), in terms of having the lowest cost.

A number of variables influence municipal results for this measure including:

- The mix, variety, and depth of library uses.
- The number and types of staff time needed to support these different activities.

A major factor behind Toronto's low costs is the high rate of library use by residents, as discussed earlier in reference to chart 9.6, as well as a higher proportion of electronic library uses.



### **2008 Achievements or 2009 Planned Initiatives**

The following initiatives are intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Toronto's Library operations.

- Launch a redesigned website with enhanced content in 2009, and with additional online self service functionality which will be rolled out over the next three years.
- More branches will offer wireless internet access and improved bandwidth on library computers.
- Through the new event space in 2009 at the Toronto Reference Library and the enriched programming at library branches throughout the city, this will expand residents' access to a variety of cultural programming
- Service hours will be increased in 2009 - Monday to Saturday morning service will increase in 8 branches and evening service will increase in 9 branches.
- Respond to the economic downturn by targeted collections spending, programming and job help site.
- Implement self-serve check out in 32 branches over the next 4 years to achieve increased service hours.